



Mental Health and Disability Services

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Purpose

As the state mental health authority, the MHDS Division develops, implements, and manages the mental health and disability service system in Iowa. The goal is to ensure quality services that promote the ability of Iowans with disabilities to live, learn, work, and recreate in the communities of their choice.

Who

The public system of mental health and disabilities services in Iowa provides a safety net for the uninsured or those who do not have commercial health insurance benefits coverage to meet their needs.

What

Mental health services are provided by a wide range of local service agencies, including community mental health centers, mental health and disability service providers, and state facilities such as mental health institutes and resource centers for people with mental retardation. The Bureau of Community Services and Planning accredits mental health and disability service providers.

The MHDS division administers:

- The State Payment Program that provides service funding for people who do not have "legal settlement" in any county.
- MHDD community services fund, property tax relief, allowed growth, and other state and federal funds to assist in providing service for eligible people. Counties individually establish eligibility criteria for services within state-mandated minimum requirements. Plans are approved by the MHDS division.
- Preparation of emergency mental health services for individuals needing immediate mental health assistance and support.
- Preparation of the state Olmstead Plan, referring to a decade-old U.S. Supreme Court decision that expands rights and choices to people with mental retardation.
- Systems of Care programs to provide coordinated, community-based services to children and youth with serious emotional disturbance and their families.
- Disaster Behavioral Health Response Teams providing behavioral health support to communities affected by natural disasters and/or critical incidents
- The Federal Community Mental Health Block Grant which supports transformation of the mental health system through promotion of evidence based and best practices for delivery of mental health services in community settings.
- Mental Health First Aid programs that provide mental health education and crisis response training to the public through a 12-hour course.
- Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness. Provides outreach, treatment, and referrals to homeless individuals with serious mental illnesses.

How are We Doing?

- About 55,000 Iowans received county-managed mental health or disability services in SFY09.
- In SFY10, 561 children and youth with serious emotional disturbance received System of Care services. Ninety-one percent of those served remained in the least restrictive treatment and living situation.
- Over 700 individuals participated in a 12 hour Mental Health First Aid course in their community in SFY10. Evaluations have been highly positive about the benefits of this course to the individual and their ability to respond to a mental health crisis.
- In FFY08 752 homeless individuals were served and 91 percent were enrolled in mental health services.